

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6895

S E C R E T WARSAW 5530

EXDIS

FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARMITAGE FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XH

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE EFFECT OF SHARING VOA/RADIO FREE EUROPE
FACILITIES

REF: A. STATE 195846; B. O/I OF DECEMBER 20, 1974

1. ALTHOUGH I HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THE SUBJECT WITH HIM RECENTLY, I BELIEVE THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS ON THE POSSIBLE EFFECT OF SHARED VOA-RFE FACILITIES REMAIN ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED SINCE HIS LETTER TO YOU OF DECEMBER 20 LAST YEAR. THOSE OF US WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER THEN CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SHARED FACILITY IS IDENTIFIED WOULD BE THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN PROVOKING POLISH REACTION OT THE CHANGE. THE POLES HAVE ALREADY MADE CLEAR THAT THEY REGARD RFE AND THE CONTENTS OF ITS BROADCASTS AS A US GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY AND THAT OUR FINANCING OF RFE PREVENTS US FROM EFFECTIVELY DISCLAIMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONTENTS OF ITS BROADCASTS. WE DO NOT FEEL THAT SHARING THE SAME TRANSMITTING FACILITIES WITH VOA WOULD LEND MUCH MORE WEIGHT TO THE POLISH ARGUMENT ON THIS SCORE, BUT IT WOULD BE ONLY PRUDENT TO INSIST THAT THE BROADCASTS NOT BE OPENLY IDENTIFIED AS RFE USING VOA FACILITIES.

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2. WHETHER THE POLES NOW ADOPT A MORE HOSTILE OR CRITICAL

ATTITUDE TOWARD VOA AS A PART OF THEIR REACTION TO CSCE
THIRD BASKET SEEMS TO US A QUESTION WHICH MUST BE CONSIDERED
SEPARATELY FROM THAT OF THE TRANSMITTING FACILITIES. THE
SHARING OF FACILITIES BY THE TWO BROADCASTERS OBVIOUSLY
WOULD GIVE THE POLES A PRETEXT FOR IDENTIFYING THE TWO
STATIONS WITH EACH OTHER WHICH THEY DO NOT PRESENTLY HAVE,
BUT THERE SEEMS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THIS PRETEXT
WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD EITHER
VOA OR RFE. WE CAN EXPECT THEM TO CONTINUE TO PROTEST
INDIVIDUAL BROADCASTS BY EITHER FACILITY AS CONSTITUTING
INTERFERENCE IN POLISH INTERNAL AFFAIRS, WHENEVER IT SUITS
THEM TO DO SO. HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT ANTICIPATE ANY
MARKED CHANGE IN THE CURRENT POLISH ATTITUDE OF CAUTIOUS
BENEVOLENCE TOWARD VOA UNLESS THEY WERE TO BE PUSHED INTO
AN ORGANIZED CAMPAIGN BY ALL THE EASTERN EUROPEANS
TO COUNTERACT PRESSURES FROM THE WEST FOR BETTER PERFOR-
MANCE ON THIRD BASKET ISSUES.

3. IN ANSWER TO THE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS IN PARAGRAPH 7
OF YOUR TELEGRAM, WE WOULD RATE IT UNLIKELY THAT SHARED
FACILITIES WOULD CAUSE POLAND TO RESUME JAMMING AGAINST
VOA. WHILE A STEPPED-UP PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST VOA
IS A SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY PROSPECT FOLLOWING HELSINKI
THAN IT HAS BEEN DURING THE PAST YEAR, WE DO NOT BELIEVE
THAT SHARED FACILITIES WOULD GIVE SUCH A CAMPAIGN MUCH
ADDED CREDIBILITY. THIRDLY, WE DO NOT REGARD THE QUESTION
OF SHARED FACILITIES AS LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY
ADVERSE EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS. FINALLY, THE
POLES MIGHT VERY WELL JOIN A CONCERTED ACTION WITH OTHER
EASTERN EUROPEANS TO PERSUADE HOST GOVERNMENTS TO SHUT
DOWN RFE TRANSMITTERS. WE BELIEVE SUCH A CAMPAIGN IS
ENDEMIC AND WOULD NOT BE MUCH EFFECTED BY THE FACT THAT
SOME OF THE FACILITIES WERE NOW SHARED WITH THE VOA.
DAVIS

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